



Request For Proposal: E.H.Zero Housing Partner Organization

Date: February 7th, 2022

Issued by: Equitable, Healthy and Zero Carbon Buildings Initiative, a partnership of the City of Grand Rapids, U.S. Green Building Council of West MI, Urban Core Collective

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The Grand Rapids Policies and Programs for Equitable, Healthy, and Zero Carbon Buildings Initiative (E.H.Zero) is seeking a Housing Partner Organization to manage a pilot project to renovate at least five homes located within the Neighborhoods of Focus while maximizing energy efficiency, affordability, and health through:

- Coordination of contractors
- Resource navigation support for participants
- Leverage available resources and programs (utility rebates, income qualifying programs, weatherization, etc.)
- Data collection, evaluation and reporting
- Sharing insight and experience with the E.H.Zero team and the community

Introduction: E.H.Zero Background & Renovation Pilot Overview

In 2017, the City of Grand Rapids was one of twelve cities selected to participate in the [Zero Cities Project](#) to develop an actionable and equitable roadmap to achieve a zero net carbon building sector by 2050. The Zero Cities Project was based on having a policy process informed by technical analysis that was to include community collaboration and a focus on equity.

In partnership with [Architecture 2030](#), our baseline building assessment showed that single family homes and commercial buildings over 10,000 sq.ft. are the largest building sector sources of carbon emissions. The [U.S. Green Building Council of West Michigan](#) serves as the partner for commercial spaces, engaging the commercial sector through the [Grand Rapids 2030 District](#). The [Urban Core Collective](#) (UCC) was recommended by a national partner and agreed to serve as the City's equity partner for this project with a specific emphasis on homes. The UCC completed an [Equity Assessment](#) which found that Kent County households below 50% of the federal poverty level spend about a third of their income on home energy bills. The UCC

also [surveyed residents](#) and identified barriers to participation in local home repair, energy efficiency and weatherization programs.

In 2021, the Zero Cities Project was completed and the partners agreed to continue the work by launching the **Grand Rapids Policies and Programs for Equitable, Healthy, and Zero Carbon Buildings Initiative** ([E.H.Zero](#)). The purpose of E.H.Zero is to co-create with community policies and programs to equitably decarbonize Grand Rapids residential and commercial buildings and present them to the City Commission in the fall of 2023 for consideration and hopeful adoption. To help E.H.Zero center and lead with equity, a five member BIPOC Consulting Team was formed with local residents who are active in the community.

One of the goals of E.H.Zero is to demonstrate what affordable low to zero carbon homes could look like in Grand Rapids while addressing equity and health. This is to be accomplished through a **renovation pilot of at least five diverse homes** to receive wrap-around repairs and services to improve energy efficiency, climate resiliency, housing affordability, and health. The homes will be a mix of renters, home owners, and housing types, and will be located within the [Neighborhoods of Focus](#). This renovation pilot will also seek to eliminate barriers for the households to leverage all available and applicable home repair services related to energy efficiency and improved health and safety.

We are excited to learn from the process of renovating these homes for potential scale-up, future programming, and/or new or improved services for residents.

For more information:

- [Zero Cities Project \(grandrapidsmi.gov\)](#)
- [Policies and Programs for Equitable, Healthy & Zero Carbon Buildings \(grandrapidsmi.gov\)](#)

Project Needs:

- Management of Home Renovation Pilot
 - Assist in identifying at least 5 diverse homes within the Neighborhoods of Focus to receive renovations. Collaborate with the E.H.Zero Leadership Team to create criteria and select participants.
 - Inspect and assess homes for areas of concern (safety, health, energy efficiency) and where improvements could be made. Conduct an energy audit and other types of audits applicable to the health, safety and financial status of each home.
 - Create a plan of action for each home renovation, identifying associated costs, opportunities for return on investment and projected timelines. Review with E.H.Zero Leadership Team prior to implementing.
 - Leverage existing resources for home repair and energy efficiency.
 - Coordinate contractors to complete repairs and energy efficiency upgrades in homes.
- Participant Support and Resource Navigation

- Identify resident home concerns, create a plan of action with them, connect them to community resources.
- Help identify racial disparities created or exacerbated by systems (housing, energy, construction, financial, healthcare) and work with the E.H.Zero Leadership Team and renovation pilot participants to identify and implement where possible methods to eliminate or reduce racial disparities and environmental injustices
- Support residents in applying for relevant home repair, weatherization, utility, etc. programs.
- Provide residents with the training and information they need to understand and maintain new features in their home. Keep residents informed throughout the renovation process. Provide information and supplies as the budget allows to support energy saving behaviors.
- Data Collection
 - Conduct a home energy audit before and after renovation. System to be used can be discussed with E.H.Zero Leadership Team.
 - Calculate anticipated energy, carbon and cost reductions and compare them to actual reductions. Exact metrics can be discussed.
 - Collect utility bill data (cost, energy use) and health information before and after renovations.
 - Health-related information to track could include:
 - Indoor air quality measures
 - Possible contaminants (lead, asbestos, mold, etc.)
 - Asthma Control Test (ACT) surveys if resident has asthma
 - Child blood lead test results, if family chooses to disclose
 - Any self-reported health issues that could be related to the home environment
- Evaluation
 - Share learnings and review data with the E.H.Zero Leadership Team and BIPOC Consulting Team.
 - Identify strengths and gaps of currently available/leveraged services.
 - Collect feedback from residents on their experiences with the pilot.
 - Did they feel it was beneficial? Noticed improvements to health and well being? Lowered energy costs? What could make the experience better for others in the future?
- Fundraising
 - Your assistance may be needed to secure final funding needed to complete the renovation pilot and/or support fundraising efforts to scale the pilot up to more than five homes (E.H.Zero Leadership Team budgeted \$150,000 for the home renovation pilot (~\$30,000 per home))
- Thought Partnership
 - Attend meetings as part of the E.H.Zero Leadership Team at least twice a month for approximately two hours each.

- Provide insight on building decarbonization policy development and assist with drafting and reviewing policies as needed.

Required Outputs:

- Report home energy audit outcomes and energy and carbon measurements for at least 5 homes pre- and post-renovation
- At least 5 homes renovated for maximum affordability, energy efficiency, climate resilience and health improvements
- Leverage available community resources for home repair, weatherization, energy efficiency upgrades, etc.

Desired Outcomes for Participating Homes:

- Get as close to carbon neutral as possible
- Have measurable energy cost burden reductions
- Have improved health and safety
- Increase resiliency to local effects of climate change

Project Timeline:

- April 11, 2022: Housing Partner joins E.H.Zero Team. Planning begins.
- Late Summer/Fall 2022: Renovation Pilot begins.
- Summer/Early Fall 2023: Review Renovation Pilot learnings ahead of E.H.Zero policy/program package proposal to City Commission.
- Fall 2023 to Spring 2024: Complete any outstanding work on homes. Collect post-project data, review outcomes, and share findings.
- May 31, 2024: Project ends.

Budget:

- \$60,000 for project management to be distributed over three time periods. The amount per year may be adjusted, but current estimates are:
 - Year 1: April 11, 2022 - May 31, 2022 - \$8,000
 - Year 2: June 1, 2022 - May 31, 2023 - \$40,000
 - Year 3: June 1, 2023 - May 31, 2024 - \$12,000
- \$150,000 has been budgeted for renovations in 5 homes (~\$30,000 per home) and the Leadership Team believes it will be secured by July 2022.

Desired Strengths:

- Trust within the community, especially with Black, Indigenous and People of Color. Staff is trusted and good at building relationships.
- Understanding of [environmental justice](#), [redlining](#), [energy burden](#), and [Zero Cities Project](#) outcomes.
- Experience working with contractors and willingness to explore relationships with new contractors, especially minority contractors

- Experience with repairs and renovations to improve energy efficiency and carbon reduction in older homes and existing buildings.
- Familiarity with environmental and health-based design criteria (LEED, Energy Star certified products, Living Building Challenge, WELL, etc.)
- Ability to calculate expected energy, cost and carbon reductions and measure actual results
- Familiarity with existing home improvement/utility/weatherization resources in the community.
- Established network and ability to communicate program outcomes in partnership with the E.H.Zero Team, pilot participants and with the public .
- Ability to work collaboratively with all stakeholders and willingness to bring on partners to support components outside of your scope
- Experience seeking, managing, and reporting to funders

Selection Criteria:

Priority will be given to organizations who demonstrate relevant experience with construction management, staff capacity to provide navigation/case management to participants in a culturally competent manner, and who have established themselves as locally trusted organizations.

We understand that one organization may not have all of the desired strengths and would consider working with two organizations whose combined experience meets the project needs. In your proposal, please identify desired strengths that are outside of the scope of your organization and recommend any partnering organizations that you believe could fill that role.

Proposal format:

Please address the following questions, keeping each response to 300 words or less:

- Organization background, overview of work done specifically in Grand Rapids and contact information
- What experience does your organization have working with BIPOC communities in the city of Grand Rapids? Do you have Spanish language capacity?
- What experience does your organization have with home renovation? Please provide examples of three projects with photos.
- What experience does your organization have with energy or carbon reduction housing renovations? Please provide specific project examples.
- What experience does your organization have with environmentally friendly, “green” or healthy residential building design? Please provide specific project examples.
- What experience does your organization have addressing health in the home? Please provide specific project examples.
- What experience does your organization have in providing case management or resource navigation support to individuals or households? Please provide specifics.
- Why is your organization a great fit for this partnership?
- Please provide three professional references with at least two being from the Grand Rapids community.

- Are there any terms or conditions for working with your organization?

Please feel free to include links to short videos, photos, case studies or stories about your organization's work.


Selection Process Timeline:

- RFP Issued: Tuesday, February 8, 2022
- Proposals Due: Monday, February 28, 2022
- Proposal Review: March 1 - 11, 2022
- Interviews: March 14 - March 25, 2022
- Notification of Decision: Expected by Thursday, March 31, 2022

How to submit proposal:

Please email your proposal as a PDF by **Monday, February 28th, 2022** to jspiller@grcity.us.

Questions may be posted in this doc for response until February 21, 2022:

 Housing Partner RFP Q&A